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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 002923

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/J

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TAGS: PREL PGOV CH JA

SUBJECT: DPJ DIET AFFAIRS CHIEF'S READOUT ON CHINA VISIT

REF: A. TOKYO 2905

¶B. TOKYO 2876

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Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission James P. Zumwalt for reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa's visit to China was aimed at ensuring that the new DPJ government started off well with Beijing, Diet Affairs Committee Chair Kenji Yamaoka told the DCM on December 17. Yamaoka and Ozawa expressed concern about China's defense spending and military buildup during their meeting with Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie. Yamaoka stressed to the DCM the primacy of the U.S.-Japan relationship, in contrast to public statements following his attendance at a symposium sponsored by the Shanghai International Research Institute on December 14, when he seemed to prioritize Japan's relationship with China over the United States. Yamaoka said he had been scheduled to return to Japan on the morning of December 15, but he decided to delay the return because he did not wish to be involved in the "Emperor issue," whereby his party received public criticism for inappropriately pressing the Imperial Household Agency to schedule a meeting between the Japanese Emperor and visiting Chinese Vice President Xi. END SUMMARY

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Emphasizing Party-to-Party Ties  
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¶2. (C) DPJ Diet Affairs Committee Chair Kenji Yamaoka invited the DCM to his office on December 17 to discuss his December 10-13 trip with DPJ Secretary General Ozawa to Beijing and his extended stay in Shanghai December 13-16. Although the meeting turned into a discussion focusing primarily on U.S.-Japan relations and, more specifically, on issues related to the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma (Ref A), Yamaoka elaborated on the purpose of Ozawa's China trip. Yamaoka said that Ozawa's visit was aimed at ensuring that the new DPJ government started off well with Beijing. In this vein, both sides refrained from discussing sensitive political issues in depth. Continuing his longstanding effort to cultivate party ties to the Communist Party of China (CPC), Ozawa brought with him roughly 140 DPJ members, including Yamaoka, and 400 party supporters to take part in

the DPJ-CPC parliamentary exchange. Ozawa visits China almost annually, and he spearheads the Japan-China Exchange Council, a framework for diplomatic dialogue between the DPJ and CPC. Yamaoka said that he himself has visited China only four or five times but has traveled there more frequently since Ozawa became DPJ president for the second time in 2006.

¶3. (C) Ozawa met Chinese President Hu Jintao and Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie during the trip. Yamaoka did not elaborate on the meeting with Hu, but his statements about Ozawa's party-to-party focus tracked with Japanese media reports describing Ozawa as having conveyed to Hu his commitment to win the Upper House elections in July 2010 and to promote friendly bilateral ties into the future. Yamaoka and Ozawa, however, did express concern about China's defense spending and military buildup during their meeting with Liang. The Japanese harbor a sense of danger about such developments, Ozawa and Yamaoka told the Defense Minister. Yamaoka said that the Chinese side repeated the usual refrain about the appropriateness of China's defense expenditures. In response, Yamaoka and Ozawa told Liang that feelings of trust were important for diplomacy.

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Clarifying Statements in Shanghai  
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¶4. (C) Yamaoka stressed to the DCM the primacy of the U.S.-Japan relationship, in contrast to statements that appeared in local Japanese press following his remarks at a symposium sponsored by the Shanghai International Research Institute on December 14. Japanese media had characterized Yamaoka and other DPJ leaders as asserting an equally

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balanced trilateral relationship among the United States, Japan, and China. Yamaoka is reported to have emphasized the importance of strengthening Japan-China ties first and then resolving "problems" with the United States. Yamaoka acknowledged the strain in U.S.-Japan ties stemming from the Futenma relocation issue during his meeting with the DCM but pointed out that U.S.-Japan relations are the linchpin of his country's foreign policy and that stable U.S.-Japan ties benefit China. U.S.-Japan-China relations are triangular in the sense that all the individual bilateral ties are important, he concluded.

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Xi's Japan Visit and Taiwan  
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¶5. (C) Ozawa and Yamaoka were leading the Japanese delegation around Beijing at roughly the same time PRC Vice President Xi Jinping was visiting Japan. Yamaoka said he was scheduled to return to Japan on the morning of December 15, but he decided to delay his return because he did not wish to be involved in the "Emperor issue." (Comment. Ozawa and the DPJ incurred sharp criticism from the Japanese press for supposedly pressing the Imperial Household Agency to break its one-month prior notice rule to grant Xi an audience with the Japanese Emperor. (Ref B.) End Comment.)

¶6. (C) Yamaoka noted that Chinese counterparts raised concern about Japan's decision to invite Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Chairperson Tsai Ingwen to Japan. Yamaoka said he asked the Chinese side why Beijing was so nervous despite Japan's clear diplomatic stance that Taiwan is a part of China.

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